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Garrison

By Staff | August 16, 2007

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Feature Article - August 16, 2007

Council signs off on Garrison Shores

by Jeff Green

Central Frontenac Council has passed a zoning bylaw amendment that will allow the members of the Garrison Shores Property Owner's to finally get their deeds more than 20 years after buying their properties.

The initial developer of what were originally over 100 shared lots on the north and south shores of the small lake near Arden is long gone. A succession of Councils starting in the days of Kennebec Council, and continuing through four terms of Central Frontenac Council have grappled with the problem of bringing the development in line with current Official Plan and zoning practices.

The townships planning consultant, Glenn Tunnock, presented the final version of what is being called a "Waterfront Special Exception Holding Zone", which is designed to make the 53 current lots at Garrison Shores legal lots in Central Frontenac.

Many of the existing buildings at Garrison Lake do not conform to setbacks rules in the townships official plan, but they will be allowed to stand. Any new development, including the construction of a spare bedroom or a deck, will require a site plan agreement with the township.

Julian Walker, the lawyer for the Garrison Shores Property Owner's Association, said the membership is eager for this bylaw to be approved, so a so-called "condominium agreement" can be registered with Frontenac County. At that point, Garrison Shores property owners will finally receive their deeds. This will allow them to do something most property owner's take for granted: sell their property if they wish.

Jeff Dubois, a property owner who has been at odds with the zoning bylaw and the agreements that have made it possible, addressed Council in opposition to the proposed bylaw.

Dubois' main criticism of the plan is that it creates waterfront lots for some of the property owners instead of reserving the waterfront as a common area, which he says would guarantee that the shoreline remain in optimal condition.

He made reference to a written opinion from the Quinte Region Conservation Authority from 2003, which stated that common ownership of the shoreline was preferable from an environmental point of view. At one time the property owners' association agreed with this position, but that has changed in the past few years.

One other property owner addressed Council, a man who has purchased two lots at Garrison Shores. He said that the bylaw should be deferred until the property association has a chance to re-

view it at a special meeting, but Julian Walker said the rest of the members were keen to have it passed.

The zoning amendment received first, second, and third reading without debate.

On July 13th, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved an Official Plan amendment that made this week's zoning bylaw amendment possible.

Jeff Dubois has already appealed that Official Plan Amendment to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). A meeting was scheduled for this week to see if Mr. Dubois concerns can be satisfied without going to the trouble of holding an OMB hearing.

Otherwise, everything will be on hold until an OMB hearing can be scheduled, which typically takes at least six months.

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